Hike in newsprint prices

221. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the public sector newsprint units have recently raised the newsprint prices;

(b) if so, what are the compulsions in raising the newsprint prices; and

(c) what will be its overall impact on the newsprint industry and what steps are being contemplated by Government to protect this industry?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The rise in the price of newsprint announced by the indigenous manufacturers towards the end of May, 1992 has been mainly on account of escalations in input costs.

(c) There is no statutory control on the prices of newsprint. However, they have been sent for ex-post facto review regarding their reasonableness to Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices.

Microwave link to Ahemedabad Doordarshan

222. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have assured that the Ahmedabad Doordarshan will be provided microwave link in early 1992;

(b) what are the reasons for delay in providing microwave linkage to Ahmedabad Doordarshan; and

(c) by when the Ahmedabad Doordarshan is likely to be provided microwave linkage?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) to (c) The various high power and low power TV transmitters in Gujarat are envisaged to be linked to Doordarshan Kendra, Ahmedabad via satellite instead of microwave mode of linkage for dissemination of regional TV service. As per present indications, the service is expected to be introduced by December, 1992.

Completion of CBI inquiry into the sponsored T.V. serials

223. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Bureau of Investigation has completed the inquiry into malpractices of selecting the sponsored TV serials; and

(b) if not, by when Government are expecting the inquiry report from C.B.I.?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Information & Broadcasting Ministry has asked C.B.I. to expedite the complete the inquiry on priority basis.

Deployment of army in sensitive areas

224. SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:
SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to handover all the electronic media installations in Punjab, Chandigarh, Jammu

and Kashmir, Haryana and Delhi to the Army till there is a improvement in the law and order situation in these areas; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, para-military forces like BSF/CRPF are being deployed to guard AIR/Doordarshan installations in the States of Punjab, and Jammu & Kashmir for providing adequate security.

Security to electronic media Employees

225. SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH:
SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any suggestion that a fool proof security cover should be provided to all electronic media employees and their families in all sensitive areas to restore their confidence; and

(b) if so, what are the details of such suggestions and the steps taken by Government in that direction?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, one of the demands put forward by the various Associations of AIR/Doordarshan employees in the wake of the killing of the Station Engineer, AIR Patiala was that the security of AIR/Doordarshan installations in the State of Punjab and J & K should be handed over to the para military forces. Accordingly, BSF/CRPF personnel are being deproved to guard AIR Doordarshan installations in the States of Punjab and J & K . An Inter-Ministerial Group comprising representatives of Minisrty of Home Affairs, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Media Units is reviewing the status of security of media installations in Punjab and J & K.

Killing of the Station Director; AIR Patiala

226. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that militants who had taken the responsibility of kidnapping the Station Director, AIR Patiala Shri M. L. Manchanda had as one of the conditions for his release sought prescription of a code of conduct for electronic media in Punjab;

(b) if so, what were the conditions offered by them and what efforts were made by Government to secure his release; and

(c) whether the headless body of the said Station Director was later recovered from one place and his head from another after a lapse of over forty days; if so, what steps have been taken to restore confidence amongst the media staff in Punjab?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) to (c) A statement released to the Press by a militant organisation claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of the Station Engineer, AIR, Patiiala and contained conditions pertaining to the broadcast and telecast of programmes from AIR & Doordarsnan Stations in Punjab and Chandigarh. The conditions included (i) broadcast of a letter written by the convicts in General A. S. Vaidva's murder case through the national hook up of AIR and Doordarshan; (ii) broadcast of all programmes in Punjabi by AIR Stations of Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Patiala and Bhatinda; (iii) stoppage of national Hindi bulletins from these Stations; (iv)